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General

Seychelles, a group consisting of 115 main islands and islets, lies scattered over the W part of the Indian Ocean, about 600 miles NE of Madagascar. **Mahe Island** (4°37'S., 55°27'E.), the largest of the group, is the site of Victoria, the capital.

The Granitic Islands, 32 in number, are part of the group and lie within about 30 miles of Mahe Island. These islands are mostly hilly, mountainous, and fringed in places by rocks and extensive reefs. Many small coral islands, which are dependencies of Seychelles, lie as far as 600 miles SW and S of Mahe Island. These islands are low and consist of sand cays or raised reefs with no permanent population. Some of the coral islands are waterless and uninhabitable. Aldabra, with a lagoon, is a rare example of a coral atoll largely untouched by man; many of its animal, plant, and insect species exist nowhere else on earth.

The climate is tropical. The hot, wet, and humid season (Northwest Monsoon) lasts from December to May. The cool-

er season of trade winds (Southeast Monsoon) lasts from June to November.

Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System information.

Cautions

Fishing with traps, handlines, gill nets, longlines, and purse seine nets, as well as by trolling and trawling, is carried out in the vicinity of all of the islands.

Currency

The official unit of currency is the Seychelles rupee, consisting of 100 cents.

Government

Seychelles, which received independence from the United Kingdom in 1976, is a republic. The President, who is elected for a 5-year term, is the head of state. The President appoints the Council of Ministers. The legislative branch consists of a 33-member People's Assembly (25 elected and 8 awarded).

In 1965, the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar, and Des Roches were transferred to the new British Indian Ocean Territory. These islands were later returned by the United Kingdom to Seychelles at the time of independence.

The legal system is based on French civil law, English common law, and traditional practices.

The capital is Victoria.



Flag of Seychelles

Holidays

The following holidays are observed:

New Year's Days	January 1-2
Good Friday	Varies
Easter Eve	Varies
Labor Day	May 1
Corpus Christi	June 2
Liberation Day	June 5
National Day	June 18
Independence Day	June 29
Assumption Day	August 15
All Saints' Day	November 1
Immaculate Conception	December 8
Christmas Day	December 25

Industries

The major industries include tourism, food processing, vanilla and coconut processing, fishing (tuna), livestock raising, boat building, beverages, and cigarette production.

The main crops include coconuts, copra, cinnamon, vanilla, sweet potatoes, yams, sugar cane, cassava, and fruits.

Languages

The official languages are English and French. Creole is also widely used.

Regulations

Entry.—No vessels may call at any island of the Seychelles group unless permission has first been obtained from the authorities at Mahe.

Restricted area.—An Area to be Avoided, which is IMO-adopted, has been established around Assumption Island and Aldabra Island as an environmental protection measure.

Vessels over 500 grt carrying oil or hazardous materials should avoid entering this area, the limits of which are indicated on the chart.

Time Zone

The Time Zone description is DELTA (-4). Daylight Savings Time is not observed.

World Time Zone Chart
<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ref/pdf/802801.pdf>

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. does not have an embassy in Seychelles. The U.S. ambassador to Mauritius is accredited to Seychelles.

U. S. Embassy Mauritius Home Page
<http://mauritius.usembassy.gov>